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AN INTERPRETATION OF
THE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
OF
OUR TIME

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AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS OF OUR TIME.

BY PROFESSOR HENRY C. ADAMS, PH. D.

IT is my purpose to interpret in this lecture,* so far as it lies in my power, the social movements of our own times. In undertaking such a task, it is necessary at the outset to choose between two ways of thinking on what is happening about us, or, stated in a personal manner, between two classes of thinkers.

On the one hand, there are those who profess to explain the unrest in modern society by referring it to the spirit of jealousy on the part of those whose possessions are small, and to the love of power and aggrandizement on the part of those who force their way into leadership. "There is no just ground for complaint," exclaim these self-appointed representatives of the great middle class. "Are not workmen, as a whole, better off than they once were,—do they not have more to eat and more to wear,—are not prices cheaper and wages higher? Why, then, should they complain? It is envy which leads them to complain,—it is ambition that voices their complaint. What they need is a parson or a prison, and it makes little difference which."

I do not care to say a word respecting this interpretation of social unrest. My opinion is that the increase of material comforts for the great mass of men is less than many seem to think; but for this morning I purpose bringing the discussion upon a higher plane. The life is more than meat. The benefits of a civilization are not synonymous with an appeased appetite. The cause of discontent lies in the minds of men, and the source of unrest is found in the aspirations of men. A social movement is not explained by saying that agitators take advantage of the spirit of envy to stir up strife. A great man is he who voices the will of the people; he cannot construe that will. A successful leader is one who points the way by which a popular ideal may be realized; he cannot create the ideal. "No man can make a revolution," exclaimed Lasalle, that prince of revolutionists, and he was right; a social movement must spring from the conditions in which men live.

From such assertions you may readily appreciate that I ally myself with those who hold that a social movement is sure to arise whenever

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there is a lack of harmony between the realities of life and the ideals of living. It becomes my duty, therefore, in undertaking to interpret the social movement of our own times, to disclose, first, those changes in industrial methods by which harmony in industries has been disturbed, and then to trace the influence of such changes into the structure of society. In this manner, we shall discover, I think, that we are dealing with a permanent historical force, and not with a passing whim.

In seeking to understand modern industrial society, it is necessary to go back to the last quarter of the last century, and inquire respecting the changes that have taken place in the processes of industry. We are in these days so accustomed to the use of machinery, and so familiar with great industries, that it is difficult to picture a society in which tools were used and in which industries were small. Yet it is scarcely a hundred years since the era of inventions began. In the textile industry, for example, at the time when Adam Smith wrote his great work, "The Wealth of Nations," the manufacture of cloth was but four steps removed from most primitive methods. Thus, the distaff had given way to the spinning-wheel; a fulling machine had come into use, by which the boys and girls were relieved from tramping about with bare feet on the cloths thrown into a running stream; a frame for holding warp had been contrived, and the flying shuttle invented. This short list completed the list of inventions which the history of the textile industry records from the Trojan war to the vandalism of Napoleon. Penelope would have been quite at home among the textile workers of the last century in England.

The flying shuttle, invented in 1738, was a contrivance as important as it was simple. It consisted of two springs fastened to the loom in such a manner that the weaver could easily snap the shuttle from side to side. Not only did this increase the efficiency of his work, but it relieved him from the most tedious part of his labor. Before this he had been obliged to bend first to the right, and throw the shuttle through, and then to the left, and throw it back again. Is it not remarkable that for centuries men should have endured the fatigue of such unnatural labor, when, by means of a hickory stick and a hempen string, and so much of ingenuity as a Yankee calls into play every day of his life, the difficulty could have been easily overcome. I bring this to your notice for the purpose of illustrating the fixedness in industrial habits.

But with the year 1760 all this was changed. It happened that a weaver by the name of Hargreaves, coming home late one night, pushed the door of his cabin suddenly open, and toppled over the spinning-wheel at which his wife sat at work. She, doubtless accustomed to such sudden entrances, did not scream or drop the yarn, and the spindle, although thrown into a perpendicular position, continued its merry hum. A bright idea flashed into the mind of the weaver: if the good wife had a dozen hands she could spin a dozen yarns at once; and upon this idea it is that England has since built her com-

mercial and manufacturing greatness. The machine which Hargreaves invented was called the Spinning-Jenny; some say because his daughter's name was Jenny, some say because his wife's name was Jenny, while others declare it was in honor of a neighbor's wife. The exact truth regarding the domestic relations of Jenny we do not know, but of one thing we are certain, the name of this female will not be forgotten as long as people wear cottons and woollens.

This invention was the first of a long series of inventions which resulted in an industrial revolution, and the difficulty is for us to appreciate that so small a thing could bring about a revolution. You have doubtless seen a child playing with his blocks upon the floor, setting up one after another in a row. So long as no accident occurs they all stand, but should the skirt of the child or a breeze from the door topple one of them over, they all fall. So it is with industries before disturbed by the restless genius of the nineteenth century. Somehow, trades had been established, — the spinner, the weaver, the fuller, and the dyer. Somehow, accustomed methods of work had been set up. Somehow, men had adjusted themselves to certain ways of doing business. The son entered the trade of his father, and the father taught the son rules of trade that had been followed for generations. Precedent was thus crystallized into habit, and the thought of change in the methods of work did not enter the minds of men. Thus for centuries, if we except agriculture, the habits of workmen remained unchanged.

It was into such a society as this that the accident of Hargreaves's invention was thrown. The spinning-jenny increased the efficiency of the spinners a hundred-fold, and thus gave the weavers more yarn than they could weave. The adjustments that had grown up with centuries were destroyed in a moment. It was essential that yarn spun by machinery should be woven by machinery, and the power-loom, thus becoming a necessity for society, was quickly invented. But economy in the use of machinery demands the best power for driving machinery, — a demand which was met by what is commonly known as the invention of the steam-engine, but which was merely the refitting of an old model that up to this time could have had no profitable commercial use had it been perfected. These are but illustrations of how one process of work depends upon another, and how a change in one part of industry demands a change throughout. It would be futile for me to mention even all the inventions of this era of invention. The spinning-jenny was followed by the water-frame, by roller-spinning, the power-loom, the engine, the safety-lamp (without which the engine could not have been supplied with coal), chemical bleaching, printing in colors from rollers, and I know not what else besides; but this genius for invention did not cease until, upon the ruins of the old domestic system of industry, there had been established what we now know as the factory system.

The most apparent of the results following upon the changes referred to is the marked increase in the efficiency of labor; but to measure that

increase is by no means a simple task. It is reflected in the rapid expansion of population which began with 1790. But figures are dry and uninteresting. It is observable also in the increased exports and imports, in the growth of property values, in the number of factories built, in the number of miles of railway opened. But again we say that figures are dry, and more than that, they are an unknown language to those not familiar with them.

Fortunately, there is another method more interesting in itself by which the increased efficiency in labor may be clearly expressed. The secret of the productiveness of modern methods of industry is that the forces of nature have been brought under the control of man. Thus it may be said that our industrial system is founded on coal, for it is this which permits man to bring such tremendous forces to his assistance. There is in a ton of coal latent energy equal to eleven million times its own weight, one eleventh of which is rendered available by means of the ordinary steam-engine. This means that a miner in Pennsylvania who digs five tons of coal a day gains for society what is equivalent to five million tons of energy, and this he does for one dollar and fifty cents.

The most surprising results are observed when we trace the use of coal in the transportation of goods. A cube of coal which will pass through a ring the size of a twenty-five cent piece will carry a ton of cargo two miles on its ocean voyage. A ton of freight may be drawn a mile on a railway by the burning of two ounces of coal. It is said there is carbon enough in a postage stamp to carry a letter on its average journey. Is it, then, any occasion for surprise that the world is growing rich when nature's forces thus serve the industrial purposes of men?

We might also measure the effect of new methods of work by estimating the increased efficiency of labor in the textile industry. For example, it was possible for a man to weave by hand from forty-two to forty-eight yards of cloth a day. Now, one man can tend power-looms and weave fifteen hundred yards of cloth in a day. The effect of machinery in agriculture is no less surprising. In our own country, seven men can grow, mill, bake, and distribute bread enough to feed a thousand. The last estimate on this point, however, is that of Carroll D. Wright. In 1880 there were in the United States fifty millions of people, but they produced an amount of value which would have required the labor of two hundred and twenty-seven millions of people working under the old methods, and this estimate does not take into account the increased population to supply the demand for increased food.

My only purpose in presenting such facts as the above is to leave upon your minds the impression that important changes have taken place in business methods and in mechanical appliances. There is greater difference between 1790 and 1890, in all matters of business procedure, than between the twelfth century and 1790. Arnold Toynbee is right in calling this stupendous change an industrial revolution.

But if a revolution, what has been its effect on society? Upon the difficult task of answering this question, I scarce know how to enter. We are dealing with the forces which give character to the nineteenth century. In a sense, indeed, we are bringing the nineteenth century to trial. The stern, unyielding spirit of commerce has gained for men the possibility of a higher and a fuller life. Do we realize the possibilities of that life, or are we like a man who, having built a fine house, is content to live in the kitchen?

Although the interpretation of this revolution in methods of industry is a difficult task, we may, at least, approach it in a simple manner. Resisting the invitation to indulge in grand generalization, I ask your attention to three questions. First, what does the industrial revolution mean for the workingman? Second, what does it mean for the statesman? Third, what interpretation may be placed upon it by the scholar? By this manner of approach we may gain a complete statement of the case. For, from the laborer we may learn what class interests are involved; from the statesman we may discover what public interests are placed in jeopardy; while the scholar, standing apart from any special interest, will be able to tell us whither the struggling forces of the nineteenth century are urging our civilization.

The appropriate answer to the first of these questions is suggested by the fact that a laboring class was born out of the changes which made modern society what it is. This appears to be paradoxical. Why should the invention of machinery, the object of which is to save labor, have resulted in the creation of a laboring class? The meaning of my statement, however, becomes clear when it is learned that by the phrase "laboring class" is not meant a class of men who labor, but a class of men who, having no property in anything but themselves, are obliged to seek an opportunity for working from those who are the proprietors of the agencies of production. It is true that in agriculture there had come to be the germ of the laboring class, but in the textile industries, in the hardware industries,—indeed, in all the trades,—there was no decided separation between employers and employees. The master and wage-earner worked side by side; both had served the same apprenticeship; and most frequently the workman was a member of the family of his master. And since no great amount of capital was required to set up a competing business, the earnings of the master could be at no time much higher than the wages of his journeyman. The point to be held in mind is that all who had to do with industries were workers, and the workers, therefore, were able to control the conditions under which they worked.

But when machinery came to be used, all this was changed, and there sprang into existence a class of proprietors over the mechanism of production, and all others engaged in manufacturing pursuits were forced to come to these proprietors for employment. Many years did not pass before a complete separation took place between these two classes. The factory system gradually arose, and by its growth inde-

pendent workers were forced to the wall. There was thus created a great class of non-possessors who depended upon daily wages for the means of livelihood. Under the old system, these men were proprietors of the material on which they worked, of the tools with which they worked, and of the houses in which their work was carried on. But under the factory system, they are proprietors of nothing. They work in a building owned by their employers, upon material owned by their employers, with machines owned by their employers. This, then, was what was meant in saying that the development of machinery had given rise to a distinct laboring class. It is the reverse of the statement that the industrial revolution has given rise to a distinct capitalist class. It means that the industrial community of this century for the first time is divided into possessors and non-possessors, whose interests seem to be identical so far as production is concerned, but whose interests are opposed to each other when questions of distribution come up for settlement.

This same fact may be presented more vividly in another manner. Did you ever think of the difference between a tool and a machine, and endeavor to understand why a society based on tools must be unlike a society based on machinery? A tool is an implement which enables a man to use to better advantage the strength that lies within him. It may be regarded as a newly-added organ by means of which his physical powers are more efficiently expended. A machine, on the other hand, is an implement or a mechanism which enables a man to bring under his control those forces external to himself. When working with machinery, or, as it is sometimes called, with capital, a man no longer relies on the force within him, — he reduces to servitude the forces without him. Now it is plain that in a society based on tools the element of labor is relatively of more importance in production than the element of capital, from which it follows that the workmen are in a position to control the conditions under which they work. But in a society based on machinery, human power is not the most important factor. It is control over the forces of nature that now measures the degree of industrial efficiency, and it follows that they who own the machinery through which natural forces work are able to determine the conditions of industry. This, then, is the significance of the change from tools to machinery. In a society adjusted to manual labor, it is absolutely impossible that a labor problem, as a class problem, should take its origin; but in a society adjusted to machinery, provided the English law of property be maintained, the development of class lines will surely make its appearance in industries.

Holding in mind the comparison thus brought to our notice, we are in a position to state in a sentence what the industrial revolution means for the laboring class. It means that the worker has lost control over the conditions of labor, and the labor agitation of our own times, so fearful in its tendencies, so demoralizing in the bitterness of hatred engendered, is but the effort of workingmen to gain again control over the conditions in which work shall be done.

We now come to consider the meaning of the industrial revolution for the statesman, or, to present the question as stated above, to ask what new duties are imposed upon government by the industrial changes which have taken place. The appropriate answer to this question is suggested by recurring to a well-known historical fact. The characteristic difference between industrial life in the Middle Ages and in the nineteenth century is that in the former period competition did not exist,—it was not allowed to exist, for law, or custom having the force of law, impeded its workings at every step. But by the last half of the eighteenth century most of the laws regulating business had become inoperative. Indeed, more than this is true. Not only had men freed themselves from the old restraints, but they had come to believe that in competition society had discovered a principle of control which, while inviting progress, secured justice. Thus, the practice of individualism was converted into the philosophy of individualism ; a new social principle was accepted in place of the old.

All this is familiar to every student of history, but there is one fact which seems to have been overlooked. At the time when individualism in industry was promulgated by Adam Smith, industries were small and widely diffused. Men were using tools, and the business relations were personal and direct. Under such conditions there is greater likelihood that competition would work with equity than at the present. But without attempting to develop this thought, let me call your attention to the significant fact. The truth is, the theory of industrial liberty, framed to meet a *régime* of hand-work, has been accepted and developed by a society which knows only machine labor. A social philosophy adjusted to a scheme of domestic industry has been maintained, notwithstanding the fact that domestic industry has given way to the factory system. There is no better illustration in the whole range of history of the illogical application of a social principle. The privileged classes in the nineteenth century have no right in reason, or in honesty, to urge in defence of their privileges a principle that took its origin in a society whose destruction was the occasion of their birth.

We are not, however, concerned with the ethics of history, nor have we time to follow out the abuses arising from this mal-adjustment of a social principle to social conditions. The question in hand pertains to the meaning of the industrial revolution for a statesman, and this is surely indicated by what has been said. A statesman knows, or should know, that a nation cannot expect a healthful growth when the philosophy of rights and duties on which its laws are based is out of harmony with the every-day life of men ; and it becomes his duty as the guardian of rights and the formulator of law, to work to restore harmony in the social organism. When, shortly after the independence of the colonies, Thomas Jefferson became Governor of Virginia, he set before himself the task of reorganizing the colonial government to meet the necessities of a free commonwealth. So, the statesman

of to-day, recognizing the industrial revolution to be an accomplished fact, should set before himself the task of so adjusting the structure of government, and of so modifying the law of industrial rights and duties, that symmetry in structure and harmony in rights may be realized for modern society.

It is possible to present this thought a little more definitely. The period intervening between 1790 and 1830 in England was a period of social disintegration, and the suffering of the dependent classes, on whose shoulders the burdens of change rested most heavily, was so great as at last to arouse the ethical sense of society. Many who themselves did not feel the burdens of change, but awakened by sympathy for the degraded condition into which English workingmen had fallen, exerted all their energies to alleviate the suffering about them. It was the degradation of the English laborer that gave rise to a school of workers and writers known as Christian socialists. The names of Frederick Maurice and of Charles Kingsley are sufficient to suggest the sweetness and light which permeated its teachings. The attention of English philanthropists was first drawn to the condition of children in factories. If you would know the horrors to which children were subjected by unregulated competition in the production of cottons, read the description which Harriet Martineau has left in her "History of England." It was for factory children that Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote that stanza so often quoted, a stanza full of impassioned pathos to one who knows the state of affairs which brought it forth.

"Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
 Ere the sorrow comes with years?
 They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,
 And that cannot stop their tears.
 The young lambs are bleating in the meadows;
 The young birds are chirping in the nest;
 The young fawns are playing with the shadows;
 The young flowers are blowing towards the west, —
 But the young, young children, O my brothers,
 They are weeping bitterly.
 They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
 In the country of the free."

I should not have drawn your attention to the philanthropists were it not that the legislation to which their efforts gave rise is typical of what government can do. The truth is, competition has not worked in the nineteenth century as Adam Smith, writing for the eighteenth century, said it would work. Shall we on that account abandon it and return to those minute regulations of early England? This is the alternative which presents itself to many, but I imagine the question is not one of unbridled industrial license or of complete governmental control, for either of these methods leads to tyranny. There must be a middle course which leads to industrial liberty. Much that has been said in favor of competition is beyond controversy. Mobil

ity of movement is essential to a highly-developed society. Without personal liberty there can be no hope, and hope is the only abiding motive to action. But we make a sad mistake if, from such a premise, we exclude the sovereign power of the State from the industrial field. That is not the best government which governs least, but which governs the most wisely.

Consider now in what a position the changes of the last one hundred years have left the statesman. Forced to admit the benefits of competition, and at the same time to admit that competition fosters evils, he is obliged to trace with faltering step a path lying midway between the policy of action and the policy of inaction. He must decide under what conditions competition works well, and see that for those conditions its actions are unimpeded; he must, on the other hand, determine under what conditions competition works badly, and either regulate its actions by law or exclude it altogether.

From this it appears that there are at least two lines of policy upon which government may enter:

First, government must regulate the plane of competition, for without legal regulation the struggle between men for commercial supremacy will surely force society to the level of the most immoral man who can sustain himself. The fittest to survive unregulated competition will be he who is morally the least fit to live. For purpose of illustration,* suppose ten manufacturers competing with each other to supply the market with cottons. Assume that nine of them, recognizing the rights of childhood, would gladly exclude from their employ all but adult labor. But the tenth man has no moral sense. His business is conducted solely with a view to large sales and a broad market. As child labor is actually cheaper than adult labor, he gives it a decided preference. What is the result? Since his goods come into competition with the goods of the other manufacturers, and since we who buy goods only ask respecting quality and price, the nine men whose moral instincts we commend will be obliged, if they would maintain themselves in business, to adopt the methods of the tenth man, whose immoral character we condemn. Thus the moral tone of business is brought down to the level of the worst man who can sustain himself in it.

What, now, can government do in such a case? One of the duties of government is to express and enforce the ethical sense of society, and in this case government may, acceding to the wishes of the nine manufacturers, pass a law saying that children shall not be employed in factories. By such interference, society is not deprived of the advantages of competition, but the plane of competition is adjusted to the moral sense of the community. Such, at least, is the defence of factory legislation, and such interference on the part of government is typical of a new line of duties which the development of great industries has imposed upon the statesman of the nineteenth century.

* This illustration is taken from my pamphlet entitled "The State in Relation to Industrial Action."

The second class of duties imposed on government by the changes which have come over modern business life are of a wholly different character. There are some industries which from their very nature are superior to competition, and for such the public has no guarantee of fair treatment. It is absurd to argue that commercial laws will insure equity in the dealings of railway companies, telegraph companies, electric-lighting companies, street-railway companies, and the like. It lies in the structure of such businesses to be conducted as monopolies and in disregard to the comparative rights of men. The important point for us to hold in mind, however, is this: The existence of monopolies proves the existence of an anti-social interest. It shows that the interest of individuals is not always identical with that of the public. Now government stands for public interest, and among the new duties imposed on government by the industrial revolution which we have described is the duty of protecting citizens against the encroachments of such monopolies as are the fruit of that revolution.

We have thus answered directly the question, what new duties the changes in modern life have imposed on government. These duties are two. First, the government must determine the plane on which competition may take place in those businesses in which it is potent. Second, it must by all possible means protect the community from those evils that arise from the uncontrolled management of a business, which from the nature of the case is superior to competition.

We come, then, in the third place, to inquire what meaning this wonderful social and industrial change has for the scholar.

As already remarked, the scholar differs from either the laborer or the statesman when contemplating modern society, in that he is not retained to represent any particular interest. He views the movements of society as it were from a height, and, though his mastery of detail may not be as complete as that of the laborer or the statesman, he will be more apt than they to discover the general trend of events. History to him is like a river lying at the base of a mountain on which he stands. He can see whence it comes from among the upland hills, he can see whither it is flowing on towards the sea. It is, then a wholeness of view that we have a right to expect from the student. And on this account, what he says, if he be a truthful watchman on the mountain, must be of use to those whose closer connection with the affairs of life does not permit so broad an outlook.

When considering the social movement from the standpoint of the laborer, it might have been stated that trade organizations appeared to him necessary for protection. He felt rather than understood the evils which machinery brought, and joined hands with fellow-workmen for resistance. This suggests a very interesting question, and one that will serve as a key to the scholars' view of social movements. Does the rise of trades-unions bear any peculiar significance, or is it to be regarded merely as an outcry from those upon whose shoulders the burden of industrial development rested most heavily? To this

question I will give a direct answer. In my opinion, combination among workmen is a necessary step in the re-crystallization of industrial rights and duties. From the sixteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the tendency has been towards disintegration in all matters of property and industries. In early society, when men worked wholly for local markets, when the relation between employer and employee was a personal relation, competition was kept in restraint by custom and by law. But with the downfall of feudalism, with the discovery of the new world, with the new spirit of personal independence infused into life by the great religious reformation and by the political struggles, all this was changed. Localism gave way to nationality, competition took the place of custom, and wealth came to be used as capital. It was at this point in the development of English society that the era of inventions made its appearance, and the result was what might easily have been expected. The power and the energy previously shown in religious and political controversies now made itself manifest in trade. Great industries sprang into existence, and under the theory of property then prevalent it naturally followed that the new social power generated by the use of machinery fell into the hands of those who were so fortunate as to become proprietors of the mechanism of production.

This is a most important fact if we would understand the industrial armament in which the world stands to-day, for it shows that the concentration of industrial power did not begin with the workmen when they organized themselves into unions, but was an inevitable result of the use of machinery in a society whose legal structure was shaped to meet the conditions of personal competition. It began when employers came to be exclusive proprietors of machinery, of material, and of factory. My point is this. The birth of a capitalist class, freed from the restraints formerly imposed by custom and law, was the first step in industrial armament, while the organization of labor into unions of trades is to be regarded as a second step, a counter-movement on the part of those whose interests were endangered by the rise of great industries. This is the historical explanation of trades-unions.

Did you ever ask under what conditions it is possible for competition to work justly? "A fair bargain," says Professor Clark," demands either a desire for justice on the part of the participants, or strategic equality between them." Now, for fifty years after the introduction of machinery there was no approach to the realization of either of these conditions. Wherever the doctrine of *laissez-faire* holds sway (and it held sway during the fifty years we are considering) an effective desire for justice is impossible. Indeed, according to the doctrine, it is absurd to strive for justice in business affairs, for, according to the doctrine, justice must result from the inter-play of self-centred motives. Nor was there strategic equality between the sellers and the buyers of labor. The ability to control the conditions of work lay wholly with the employers. An individual work-

man was swallowed up and overwhelmed in the vortex of competitive forces. Laborers found that they had lost the importance which they formerly enjoyed, and it was to recover their lost ground that they organized themselves into unions. It was to obtain strategic equality with their masters that they entered into combinations. It was to mass their brute force against the brute force of machinery that they submitted to the military discipline of trade organizations. Thus the growth of trades-unions is to be regarded as a counter-movement, not an aggressive movement. It marks the second step in the crystallization of industrial power, not the first step.

Of course you will ask what will be the outcome of this industrial armament in which the Christian world now lives. That question cannot be answered. What the future has in store is known only to Him Who holds the destiny of nations in His hands. But of one thing we may be sure. Unless some way be discovered by which the deep ethical purpose of society can be brought to bear upon industrial questions, our magnificent material civilization will crumble to ashes in our hands. Some advocate the destruction of trades-unions. Stop organization among workmen, they cry, and all will go on in harmony and quiet. I will not stop to show that this would bring back the state of affairs existing in the first quarter of the century, which resulted in forcing the workman to the bottom of the abyss. Such a proposal is childish, for the thing proposed is impossible. As well might we call on the waters of the Niagara to roll back. Organization is the most potent fact in the industrial history of the nineteenth century, and it must either be used for the good of society, or society must bear the ills which it brings.

The only practical question, then, asks how to use organization. One hears a great deal these days about the relation of ethics to economics. Certainly many foolish things have been said on this point, but at bottom the talk rests on the eternal truth that a peace born of justice can never be realized by balancing brute force against brute force. And yet this is what the men who control the business affairs of to-day are endeavoring to do. To my mind, the ethical sense of society must be brought to bear in settling business affairs. Indeed, I am willing to go further. In many cases the ethical principle must supplant the competitive principle, and it is an encouraging thought, to say the least, that possibly the growth of organized labor has provided the machinery by which this may be done. Above the interest of the contending parties stands the interest of the public, of which the State is the natural guardian, and one way to realize the ethical purpose of society in business affairs is by means of legislation to bring the ethical sense of society to bear on business affairs. Such a statement, of course, opens up a wide field of discussion. I will only say, in illustration of my meaning, that the long list of statutes known as factory acts, by which the plane of competition is legally determined, or the establishment of commissions whose duty it is to guard the interests of the public when endangered by the growth of

monopolies, are to be regarded as the legal expression of the ethical sense of society.

Laws of this sort, however, do not touch the labor problem. That problem has to do with the rights and duties under which work shall be done. Its solution, then, is beyond the law. The object held in view by the workmen, when they organized themselves into unions, was to gain again that control over the conditions of labor which they lost when machinery took the place of tools. How such an end will be attained we cannot say. Some advocate co-operation, others urge the extension of the principle of profit-sharing, while still others seem to think all difficulties would disappear should wages fluctuate with the price of goods. We must pass these proposals without discussion. A thought of more promise, as it appears to me, but by no means as familiar, is that the prevalent tendency towards crystallization of industrial power should be carried one step further, until employers and employees are all to be found in the same organization. This is a simple idea, but it is far-reaching in its tendencies. Its realization would require that employers should recognize unions and deal with the men in a body; that they should be willing to submit all matters of internal organization to arbitration; that men already employed in industry should have preference over men outside; and, what is perhaps of most importance, all these should come to the workingmen as their right, and not by the grace of employers. This seems like giving up everything to the workmen, and it would indeed result in a new form of industrial organization in which the wage-earner would receive greater consideration. But it would, I am sure, increase rather than decrease the efficiency of industry, and be of mutual advantage to all concerned.

Without attempting to develop the idea thus suggested, let me, in closing, bring the social movement of our time into harmony with the observed tendencies of modern industry.

In matters of religion and government, the characteristic tendency of modern history has been towards the development of personal liberty. The power of organized dogma has given way before the assertion of the individual to think for himself, and the doctrine of the divine right of kings has been supplanted by the theory of representative government. Now it requires no very profound study to see that the theory on which industries are organized is not in harmony with the theory realized in the other departments of our democratic society. The actual control over industries lies with those who possess property. There is no industrial liberty for those who possess no property, except the liberty to seek employment. The idea which now maintains with regard to industrial rights is analogous to the idea entertained by Charles I. with regard to political rights. The question at issue between this king and our Puritan ancestors was: Is control over political power a right or a grant? It is a right, said the English ruler, and I will exercise it as I please. It is a grant, said the Puritan, and you will please to exercise it as we will. You are

familiar with the result, and how out of the controversy responsible government was established.

Now it seems to me that the social movement of our own times is a movement of the same sort. The power which men of property now claim they have the right to use in an irresponsible manner is the power generated by the development of machinery. But this claim is denied by the great class of non-possessors. The power of capital, it is asserted, is a social power, and the laws of property which grant irresponsible control over it to individuals are unjust laws. Thus, the question which now confronts the industrial world is this : Is control over industrial power a right or a grant ; are capitalists proprietors or are they agents ? No one can say how these questions will be answered ; but if the future may be read from the past, and if the spirit of history regards either logic or equity, it requires no great intellectual courage to assert that the social movement of our own times will not rest until there has been established in supreme authority that triumvirate of ideas, Religious Liberty, Political Liberty, and Industrial Liberty.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING.

BY FRANCIS WATTS LEE.

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For all purposes of general reference, the following works may be consulted with advantage.

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THEORY.

While the perusal of current literature on special topics is by far the best means of becoming familiar with Political Economy, some acquaintance with the outlines of Economic Theory as held by modern students is highly desirable if not absolutely indispensable to a proper understanding of modern conditions and of the questions to which they give rise. This may readily be obtained from,—

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